R E M A R K S

In the Office Action dated January 15, 2003, claims 1-4 and 6 were rejected based on the prior art, but dependent claim 5 was stated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claims 7-21 were allowed.

By the present amendment, the subject matter of claim 5 has been embodied in independent claim 1, and claim 5 has been cancelled. Claim 1 has been editorially amended to more consistently track the present specification. The "specific consumable" as used in claim 1 is intended to be a designation for a particular type of consumable, rather than itself being a physical entity. The physical "aggregation" of the code word is thus with the replacement consumable (i.e. an authorized replacement consumable) rather than the "specific consumable" as that term is used in claim 1. Dependent claims 2, 3 and 4 also have been editorially amended consistent with the editorial amendments in claim 1.

New claim 22 has been added to describe another way of aggregating the code word with the replacement consumable. The subject matter of claim 21 is supported in the specification as originally filed at page 12, lines 20-22.

In view of the indicated allowability of claim 5, and the allowance of claims 7-21, all claims of the application are submitted to be in condition for allowance, and early reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Submitted by,

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IN THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 has been amended as follows:

1.   (Amended)   A method for protecting a device against operation with an unallowed consumable, comprising the steps of:

(a)   storing a plurality of reference code words at a data center;

(b)   generating a code word having a predetermined relationship to at least one of said reference code words;

(c)   allocating said generated code word to a specific consumable and storing said allocation at said data center;

(d)   aggregating <u>an authentic replacement consumable, corresponding to</u> said specific consumable<u>,</u> with said generated code word<u>, during manufacturing of</u> <u>said replacement consumable at a manufacturer, generating an identification number</u> <u>for the replacement consumable conforming to said generated code word</u>.

Claim 2 has been amended as follows:

2. (Amended)   A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein step (d) comprises designating said generated code word on a carrier and permanently affixing said carrier to said [specific] <u>authorized replacement</u> consumable.

Claim 3 has been amended as follows:

3. (Amended)   A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein step (d) comprises applying said generated code word on said [specific] <u>authorized</u> <u>replacement</u> consumable as a marking.

Claim 4 has been amended as follows:

4. (Amended) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein step (d) comprises selecting a technique for aggregating said [specific] authorized replacement consumable with said generated code word dependent on a physical nature of said [specific] authorized replacement consumable.

Cancel claim 5.